



**A New State of the Arts: Reimagined, Reinvented, Restored  
January 26 – 28, 2021**

**CONFERENCE SCHEDULE**

**January 26, 2021**

**4 – 4:55 PM Pre-Conference – Peer-like Breakout Sessions**

- Leadership (Executive Directors, Board Members, Presenting/Producing Organizations) (Janet Starke, Executive Director, VCA)
- Development/Fundraising/Marketing (Abbi Haggerty, Executive Director, Richmond Performing Arts Alliance)
- Arts Education (Arts Education Staff, Teaching Artists, Educators) (Casey Polczynski, PhD, Arts in Education Coordinator, VCA)
- Local Government/Public Art (Doug Jackson, Arts and Culture Coordinator, City of Roanoke)
- Local Arts Agencies (Michelle Isabelle-Stark, Executive Director, Arlington Cultural Affairs/Linda Sullivan, President, ARTSFAIRFAX)
- Individual Artists (Cathy Welborn, Program Coordinator, VCA)

**5 – 6 PM Opening Plenary and Reception**

Janet Starke, Executive Director  
Special Guest, Fran Bradford, Deputy Secretary of Education,  
Commonwealth of Virginia  
Abigail Gómez, Chair, Commission Board  
Performances by Members of the VCA Performing Arts Tour Directory  
Presentation of Art Stars Awards by Dominion Energy Foundation

## January 27, 2021

9 – 9:50 AM

### **Opening Plenary**

Welcome and Remarks by Janet Starke, Executive Director

Welcome and Remarks by Abigail Gómez, Chair, Commission Board

Introduction of 21|24 Strategic Plan

Poetry Recitation and Presentation by Roscoe Burnems, Inaugural Poet Laureate, City of Richmond

Additional Remarks

10 – 10:50 AM

### **Breakout Sessions 1**

#### ***Deficit Is Not a Dirty Word***

**Presenter: Cyrus Pace**, Executive Director, The Jefferson Center (Roanoke)

**Moderator: Janet Starke**, Executive Director, Virginia Commission for the Arts

**Session Theme(s): Executive Leadership, Board Leadership, Leadership Development**

The pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges for us all, particularly as leaders we attempt to balance the drive for earned revenue, with the needed underwriting to fulfill our mission to provide opportunities to experience great art. Each organization has its own balance of earned to contributed revenue, and its unique balance sheet of operating funds (working capital) and long-term savings. In trying times, everything should be tried--even the seemingly sacrosanct application of deficit spending. Deficit is not a concept that is fully understood, which can result in tension between boards and executive leadership, executive leadership and financial managers, and anyone who owns a stake in the short-, mid-, and long-term financial health of an organization. Explore how leadership may best leverage a strategy of deficit spending, for the longer-term viability and sustainability of their organization.

#### ***The Role of Arts Education in Diversifying the Field***

**Presenter(s): Quanice Floyd**, Executive Director, Arts Education in Maryland Schools; Founder and Executive Director, Arts Administrators of Color Network; **Lecolion Washington**, Executive Director, Community Music Center (Boston); **John V. Brown**, Vice Provost of Music, Professor of the Practice of Music, and Director of the Duke Jazz Program, Duke University (Durham)

**Moderator: Casey Polczynski, PHD, Arts in Education Coordinator, VCA**

**Session Theme(s): IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access), Arts Education, Community Engagement**

It has long been recognized that part of the issue of a lack of diversity in the field stems from decades-long declines in access to quality arts education. In this session, hear from leaders who are working to address the problem, through arts education in K-12 public schools and community partnerships, as well as higher education, and what they identify as what more is needed to truly cultivate systemic change.

***Public Art in Response to Communities in Crisis***

**Presenter(s): Kate Pittman**, Executive Director, ViBE Creative District (Virginia Beach); **Ashley Hawkins**, Executive Director, Studio Two Three (Richmond); **Alan Goffinski**, Executive Director, Bridge PAI (Charlottesville)

**Moderator: Asa Jackson, Artist, VCA Commissioner**

Even in a year of unprecedented crises that included the pandemic and Black Lives Matter/social justice movements, the arts demonstrated—once again—how it serves as an integral partner in community support, recovery and revitalization. Here, learn how organizations quickly transitioned to meet the community need, primarily through authentic engagement in art.

**11 – 11:50 AM**

**Breakout Sessions 2**

***Putting Action to Deeds: How Two Theatres Are Bringing Equity to the Forefront***

**Presenter(s): Phil Whiteway**, Managing Director, Virginia Repertory Theatre; **Katrinah Carol Lewis**, Co-Artistic Director, Virginia Repertory Theatre (Richmond); **Katy Brown**, Producing Artistic Director, Barter Theatre; **Patrice Foster**, Director, Barter Theatre; **Quinton Cockrell**, Playwright, Barter Theatre (Abingdon)

**Moderator: Janet Starke, Executive Director, VCA**

**Session Theme(s): IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access), Leadership Development**

As arts organizations confront issues of how to survive in these current times, many have rightfully identified that their models must change to recognize very real and present community characteristics; to engage *all*

the diverse members of their community with authenticity and care. Here, learn how two of the state's leading and longest-operating theater companies are heeding the call; developing new initiatives and new structures in fulfillment of their mission.

***The Rise of Creative Youth Development - Frameworks, Trends, and Models - Part 1***

**Presenter(s):** **Matt D'Arrigo**, Director, Creative Youth Development, The Clare Rose Foundation, San Diego, CA; **James Halliday**, Executive Director, A Reason to Survive (ARTS), San Diego, CA; **Brandon Steppe**, David's Harps Foundation, San Diego, CA; **Catherine (Cat) Corral**, Co-Founder and Executive/Artistic Director, transenDANCE, San Diego, CA

**Moderator:** **Casey Polczynski, PHD, Arts in Education Coordinator, VCA**

**Session Theme(s):** **IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access), Arts Education, Community Engagement**

Creative Youth Development is a nationally-recognized and developed body of work steeped in three guiding principles: Racial Justice and Social Equity, Youth Voice, and Collective Action. Creative Youth Development is a commitment to supporting young people's stories, ideas, and dreams through creative expression and honoring their lived experience. This work is needed now more than ever! Join for this two-part presentation to learn about the national framework and three models based in San Diego, CA.

***Wellness Wednesday: Taking Time to Practice Self-Care***

**Presenter(s):** **Mary-Mitchell Campbell**, Orchestrator and Musical Director; Founder, Artists Striving to End Poverty, Wellness Wednesday (New York City); **Dr. Keith Bell**, Licensed Acupuncturist, Co-host, Wellness Wednesday (Richmond)

**Moderator:** **Jan Monroe, VCA Commissioner**

**Session Theme(s):** **Mental Health, Self-Care**

Arts organizations leaders, staff members, and individual artists have struggled to lead and manage work, families and self in the midst of an unprecedented health, economic and societal crisis. The past near-year has tested every measure of work-life balance, and never has it been more imperative to practice self-care. Since early on in the pandemic Mary-Mitchell Campbell and Dr. Keith Bell have been hosting a weekly Wellness Wednesday—talking with Broadway and other artists about the impacts to self, and the body's responses. Join them to learn about how

artists have leaned in to their artistry to cope, the physiological ways in which the body most naturally responds to stresses, and methods to manage it all—taking better control of your mental health and wellness.

**12 – 12:50 PM**

***Leading through Crisis: How Arts Leaders Have Cared for Organizations and Their Teams***

**Presenter(s):** **Cyrus Pace**, Executive Director, The Jefferson Center; **Ryan Ripperton**, Executive Director and Chief Inspiration Officer, SPARC; **Karen Phillion**, President and CEO, Virginia Symphony Orchestra

**Moderator:** **Janet Starke**, Executive Director, VCA

**Session Theme(s): Leadership Development**

For the past 10 months, organizational leaders have not only been consumed in operations and budgeting strategies to sustain their organizations, but also the care of and attention to their boards, staffs, patrons, donors, and communities at large. Learn how three organizations from across the state have enacted strategic leadership through it all, and engage in peer discussion about the challenges ahead.

***The Rise of Creative Youth Development - Frameworks, Trends, and Models - Pt. 2***

**Presenter(s):** **Matt D'Arrigo**, Director, Creative Youth Development, The Clare Rose Foundation (San Diego); **Evelyn Francis**, Director of Programs, SPARC (School of the Performing Arts for the Richmond Community), **Nicole Jones**, Deputy Director, Art 180 (Richmond); **Deirdre Love**, Founder and Executive Director, Teens With a Purpose (Virginia Beach)

**Moderator:** **Casey Polczynski, PHD**, Arts in Education Coordinator, VCA

**Session Theme(s): Arts Education, IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access)**

Creative Youth Development is a nationally-recognized and developed body of work steeped in three guiding principles: Racial Justice and Social Equity, Youth Voice, and Collective Action. Creative Youth Development is a commitment to supporting young people's stories, ideas, and dreams through creative expression and honoring their lived experience. This work is needed now more than ever! As a follow up to Part 1, learn about three working models taking place across the Commonwealth.

### ***How The Healing Arts Continue to Meet the Need***

**Presenter(s):** **Dr. David Trinkle**, Geriatric Psychiatrist, Commissioner – Virginia Commission for the Arts (Roanoke); **Dr. Niyati Dhokai**, Research Assistant Professor, College of Visual and Performing Arts, Program Director, Veterans and the Arts Initiative, Hylton Performing Arts Center (Manassas); **Mark Hierholzer**, President and Founder, Art for the Journey (Richmond); **Cynthia Paullin**, Executive Director, Art for the Journey (Richmond)

**Moderator:** **Dr. David Trinkle, VCA Commissioner**

**Session Theme(s):** **Arts and Healing, IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access)**

In a time of quarantine and isolation, some of the most vulnerable populations have included veterans, seniors and incarcerated individuals. Organizations and healing arts practitioners have remained resolute in providing meaningful and engaging arts experiences for these populations, even in a virtual setting. Learn how groups in three differing communities have pivoted programming, and how they see the programming evolving in the year ahead.

### **ENCORE SESSION - WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27**

**1 – 2 PM**

#### ***Breaking the Sound Barrier***

**Presenter:** **Afa S. Dworkin**, President & Artistic Director, The Sphinx Organization

**Moderator:** **Janet Starke, Executive Director, VCA**

**Session Theme(s):** **IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access), Arts Education, Community Engagement**

Since its founding in 1997, the Sphinx Organization has gained national and international recognition as a leading social justice organization dedicated to transforming lives through the power of diversity in the arts. Sphinx's four program areas – Education & Access, Artist Development, Performing Artists, and Arts Leadership – form a pipeline that develops and supports diversity and inclusion in classical music at every level: music education, artists performing on stage, the repertoire and programming being performed, the communities represented in audiences, and the artistic and administrative leadership within the field.

Join this special ENCORE SESSION to hear President and Artistic Director, Afa S. Dworkin share the work of Sphinx, the impact it is having on developing new artists and arts administrators, and evidence that

suggests—the charge is not to develop the talent; rather the talent is out there, and needs to be identified and given the opportunity to shine!

**9 – 9:50 AM**      **January 28**

***ARTS IMPACT NOW. Action Planning for Equity and Empowerment***

**Presenter(s): Douglas Jackson**, Arts and Culture Coordinator, City of Roanoke; **Macklyn Mosely**, Library Services Assistant, Roanoke Public Libraries

**Moderator: Barbara Parker, VCA Commissioner**

**Session Theme(s):** Local Government, Public Art, Community Engagement

The City of Roanoke advances the arts sector and community goals through the work of the Roanoke Arts Commission (RAC). Having accomplished the bulk of the 2012 Arts and Cultural Plan, the citizen volunteers of the RAC are taking a hard look at the role of arts and culture in the current moment. As partners organize for a more equitable future and support each other through a pandemic, the RAC is engaging in projects on the ground, now. In doing so, they're learning together with community organizations, other City departments, local leaders, and residents working to effect change. Hear about key projects that are fostering a collective approach to community-driven, community-responsive, and community-building art.

***Performing and Presenting in a Post-Pandemic World***

**Presenter(s): Rebecca A. Ferrell**, Director of Programs, Dance/USA (Washington, DC); **Krista Bradley**, Director, Programs and Resources, Association of Performing Arts Professionals (APAP) (Washington, DC)

**Moderator: Janet Starke, Executive Director, VCA**

**Session Theme(s): Leadership, (Presenting, Producing), Artists**

Performers and presenting venues continue to be extremely limited in the ability to return to any level of near-normal in scheduling, presenting or producing performances. Hear from two member service organizations who support the community of performers and presenters—nationally and internationally—to learn how others in the industry are making plans to return--in the short- and long-term future. The session will also invite peer conversation about the opportunities and challenges ahead.

### ***New Fine Arts SOLs and Working with Schools in the Year Ahead***

**Presenter(s):** Kelly Bisogno, Fine Arts Coordinator, Virginia Department of Education (Richmond); Sheila Arnold, Storyteller and Teaching Artist (Hampton); Heidi Rugg, Teaching Artist/Founder, Barefoot Puppets Theatre (Richmond)

**Moderator:** Casey Polczynski, PhD, AIE Coordinator, VCA

**Session Theme(s):** Arts Education, IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access), Community Engagement

It is somewhat hard to believe that even as the pandemic was unfolding in spring 2020, the Virginia Department released new Fine Arts Standards of Learning. These SOLs marked the first revision since 2013. At the same time, working with schools and school systems was greatly impacted as districts had to determine the best (and ever-evolving) methods of learning for their distinct communities. What does the future hold? How can Teaching Artists best utilize the new Fine Arts SOLs to strengthen their work with teachers? And what does the 2021-22 school year look like for external community partnerships? Join this group to learn more and discuss.

### ***Unconscious Bias: What It Means in Leadership and Programming Pt. 1***

**Presenter:** Jessica Hawthorne, Director of Programs, Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities

**Moderator:** [Abigail Gómez](#), Chair, VCA Commission Board

**Session Theme(s):** Leadership Development, Board Development, IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access)

Research on unconscious bias shows how the brain takes shortcuts that can be informed by socialized biases. By better understanding the reality of unconscious bias, participants can then work to create inclusive and equitable environments. This session will provide practical tips and approaches that organizations can implement to help constituents make better, bias-free decisions.

**10 – 10:50 AM**

### ***Creative Fundraising in Challenging Times***

**Presenter(s):** Keith Curtis, President, The Curtis Group; Rob Cross, Executive Director, Virginia Arts Festival (Norfolk); Shawn Puller, Executive Director, Garth Newel Music Center (Warm Springs); Karen Philion, Virginia Symphony Orchestra (Norfolk)

**Moderator: Robert Goudie**, VCA Commissioner

**Session Theme(s): Development/Fundraising, Leadership Development**

Can you still raise money for your organization in the midst of these challenging and uncertain times? YES! – if done creatively and thoughtfully. Join The Curtis Group's President Keith Curtis along with panelists Karen Philon, President & CEO of the Virginia Symphony, Robert Cross, Executive Director of the Virginia Arts Festival and Shawn Puller, Executive Director of Garth Newel Music Center as they discuss fundraising trends, real-life examples, success stories, and challenges both past and anticipated. They will address key topics such as how to make your organization stand out, creative donor cultivation and engagement opportunities, and how they are all strategically moving forward to ensure the future of the arts.

***Unconscious Bias: What It Means in Leadership and Programming Pt. 2***

**Presenter: Jessica Hawthorne**, Director of Programs, Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities

**Moderator: [Abigail Gómez](#)** , Chair, Commission Board

**Session Theme(s):** Leadership Development, Board Development, IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access)

In the second part of this two-part session, participants will develop a tangible plan of action to implement within your organization.

## ***Understanding Trauma and Building Resilience: The Brain at Work Pt. 1***

**Presenter:** John Richardson-Lauve, LCSW, Childsavers (Richmond)

**Moderator:** Casey Polczynski, AIE Coordinator, VCA

**Session Theme(s):** Arts Education, Self-Care

One out of four children in the United States will experience some sort of trauma by the age of four. That number has only increased in the past year, compounded by the trauma that adults who work with children have experienced in response to the pandemic, Black Lives Matter and more. Trauma creates changes to our biology, our genetics and epigenetics, our behavior, and ultimately myriad lifetime health outcomes. Looking through a trauma-informed lens allows us to have effective interventions to help individuals reach their full potential. Learn more about how to manage through the trauma and strategies for working with individuals who have dealt with trauma.

**11 - 11:50 AM**

## **Facing Change: Advancing Museum Board Diversity and Inclusion**

**Presenter:** Grace Stewart, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion Project Manager, American Alliance for Museums

**Moderator:** Asa Jackson, Vice Chair, VCA Commission Board

**Session Theme(s):** IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access), Leadership Development, Board Development

In spring 2017, following its strategic plan, the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) convened the Working Group on Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (DEAI). Twenty museum professionals, representing a variety of disciplines, organizational sizes and types, and perspectives, came together, monthly at the Alliance's offices in Arlington, to examine the characteristics of effective museum inclusion practices and considered what steps the field could take to promote DEAI. This led, in part, to the monumental Facing Change Initiative – Advancing Museum Board Diversity and Inclusion, funded by Ford, Walton, and Mellon foundations. Hear about the Initiative, lessons learned to date, and continued goals and anticipated outcomes in the time ahead.

## **Creating Meaningful Arts Learning for Youth in the Virtual World**

**Presenter(s): Jennifer Edelen**, Director, Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning Through the Arts; **Valerie Branch**, Teaching Artist, Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning Through the Arts; **Stan Kang**, Executive Director, Educational Theatre Company

**Moderator: Barbara Parker, VCA Commissioner**

As the pandemic unfolded, education programs delivered by arts organizations and teaching artists came to a halt, and were only largely able to resurface after quick-thinking and pivoting to virtual platforms. Much can be lost however, in the hands-on arts learning experience once it is moved to the virtual world. Hear from two organizations who pivoted to virtual programming, with still intention thought and construct around authentic learning in the arts.

### ***Virtually Yours: Strategies for Successful Virtual Programming***

**Presenter(s): Erin Harms**, Deputy Director of Development and Director of Institutional Giving, Signature Theatre (Arlington); **Jason Najjoun**, Managing Director, Synetic Theater (Arlington)

**Moderator: Janet Starke, Executive Director, VCA**

**Session Theme(s):** Leadership Development, Development/Fundraising, Programming

Many arts organizations aptly pivoted to virtual programming as venues were closed to the public. Many arts organizations found success in not only producing quality virtual events, but reached new audiences that far surpassed the geographic reach previously attained. Often however, revenue did not follow the migration to the internet. Hear how two theater companies were able to develop a successful slate of virtual programming and have even tied revenue to it.

### ***Understanding Trauma and Building Resilience: The Brain at Work Pt. 2***

**Presenter: John Richardson-Lauve**, LCSW, Childsavers (Richmond)

**Moderator: Jan Monroe, VCA Commissioner**

**Session Theme(s): Arts Education, Self-Care**

One out of four children in the United States will experience some sort of trauma by the age of four. That number has only increased in the past year, compounded by the trauma that adults who work with children have

experienced in response to the pandemic, Black Lives Matter and more. Trauma creates changes to our biology, our genetics and epigenetics, our behavior, and ultimately myriad lifetime health outcomes. Looking through a trauma-informed lens allows us to have effective interventions to help individuals reach their full potential. Learn more about how to manage through the trauma and strategies for working with individuals who have dealt with trauma.

**12 - 12:50 PM**

## **Closing Plenary and Keynote**

### **Introduction of Keynote**

**Janet Starke**, Executive Director, VCA

### **Closing Keynote Address**

#### **Building Resilience in An Age of Uncertainty for Artists and Arts Leaders**

**Presenter: Beth Kanter**, Trainer, Facilitator, Author

Working remotely during a pandemic, financial crises, civil unrest, and a seemingly endless list of overlapping emergencies has undeniably added more stress to our lives. Not only have our in-person offices pivoted to virtual or semi-virtual, but our routines and program delivery have been disrupted.

It is important to focus on your team's connection to each other and a culture of wellbeing, especially when our couches are our water coolers. It is time to encourage more employee engagement, trust, and balance in the face of extreme uncertainty. We also have to encourage staff to maintain work/life balance and practice self-care.

Join Beth Kanter ([www.bethkanter.org](http://www.bethkanter.org)), nonprofit thought leader, virtual facilitator, and author of the Happy Healthy Nonprofit, for an interactive keynote session on how to build your personal resilience and calm during a time of high anxiety. She will facilitate an engaging session on Zoom while sharing tips to help you maintain work/life balance during this difficult time and help you succeed in a post-COVID world.